



Valley Forge Welcomes “The Oneidas at the Battle of Oriskany”

For the first time, the Oneida Nation will display its original painting, “The Oneidas at the Battle of Oriskany,” at Valley Forge National Historic Park in Valley Forge, Penn., in April.

“Displaying the painting of the Battle of Oriskany at Valley Forge, even if for only a short time, reminds visitors of the important connection of the northern frontier regions of New York with the main American army in the Delaware Valley,” said Superintendent Mike Caldwell. “Our relationship with the Oneidas benefits our mission by enriching our living history interpretation and by strengthening our resolve to continue partnering with other under-recognized but key constituency groups.”

The painting depicts one of the bloodiest battles of the Revolutionary War, with an emphasis on the Oneidas who fought alongside the colonists as the United States’ first allies. The scene centers on Han Yerry, an Oneida warrior who, despite being shot in the wrist, continued to fight with the aid of his wife, Two Kettles. Han Yerry’s son is also shown fighting off the enemy loyalists.

About 60 Oneida warriors fought alongside the colonists on Aug. 6, 1777. The Oneidas and the colonial militia, led by Gen. Nicholas Herkimer, were able to stop the advance of the British troops, a feat that is widely considered to be a turning point in the Revolutionary War.

“The following spring, Oneida warriors made the arduous overland journey to the main American army at Valley Forge, to offer their assistance to their new allies,” Caldwell added. “Their expertise in scouting and reconnaissance duties was almost immediately put to good use.”

During the winter of 1777-1778, the Oneidas sent a contingent to Valley Forge. Oneida Chief Shenendoah organized a gift of corn to feed troops. The food was taken from the Nation’s reserves and carried by foot to Southeastern Pennsylvania. Oneida woman Polly Cooper stayed to show the soldiers how to prepare the white Indian corn, which is different than today’s hybrid yellow corn. Cooper refused payment for her duty. For her efforts, Martha Washington presented Cooper a bonnet and shawl. The shawl survives to this day.

The Welcome Center at Valley Forge is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. from September to June 14, and from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. June 14 to Sept. 1. Park grounds are open from dawn

###About Valley Forge National Historical Park###

Valley Forge National Historical Park is a national icon of the American Revolution that serves as a place where visitors enjoy, understand, care for, and preserve America's history and natural heritage. The Park offers an engaging, complete educational and recreational experience, providing an important piece of the American story in a beautiful, historical, preserved landscape.